

REMARKS

Claims 6-17 are pending in the application. Claims 6-8 are rejected, and claims 9-17 are allowed. By the present amendment, claims 6 and 7 have been amended, and claims 18-20 have been added to further define the invention. The Examiner's reconsideration of the rejection in view of the following remarks and amendments is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claims 9-17 are allowed.

Claim objections:

With respect to claim 7, Examiner suggests that the word "planarizing" in line 3 of claim 7 be deleted and replaced with --a second planarization step--.

Claim 7 has been amended to read "*planarizing the oxidation-preventive to a level that is substantially even with an upper surface of the planarization stop film.*" Applicant respectfully submits that the amendment to claim 7 overcomes Examiner's objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim objection is respectfully requested.

Claim rejections- 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Lee et al. (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/0005560).

It is respectfully submitted that, at the very minimum, claim 6 is not anticipated by Lee because Lee does not teach or suggest a method for forming a trench isolation comprising, *inter alia*, performing a thermal oxidation process such that a thermal oxide film is formed on a bottom and a sidewall of the trench, and on a sidewall and a top surface of the planarization stop film, as essentially claimed in claim 6. Indeed, the Examiner acknowledges on page 3 of the Office Action that the prior art does not teach a method of forming a trench isolation including forming a thermal

oxide on a sidewall and top surface of a planarization stop film. Therefore, claim 6 is not anticipated and is patentably distinct over Lee.

Claims 7-8 depend from claim 6. As such, claims 7-8 are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as given for claim 6.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim rejections pursuant 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is respectfully requested.

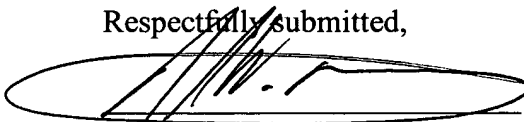
With respect to claim 18, it is respectfully submitted that, at the very minimum, claim 18 is believed to be patentable over Lee since Lee does not disclose a method for forming a trench isolation comprising, *inter alia*, *recessing the trench fill insulating material to a level substantially even with an upper surface of the pad oxide layer*.

Claims 19-20 depend from claim 18. As such, claims 19-20 are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as given for claim 18.

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that all the claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable reconsideration of the case is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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